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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DS/IP/AF, DS/IP/ITA, DS/DSS/ODAC, S/CT, D, P, M, INR, CA, AF/S; GABORONE FOR RSO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 6/3/2018

TAGS: ASEC PGOV CASC LT

SUBJECT: MASERU EAC DISCUSSES 4TH OF JULY SECURITY POSTURE

REF: STATE 058161

CLASSIFIED BY: CHRISTIAN REDMER, GSO, GSO.

REASON: 1.4 (d)

¶1. (SBU) Charge convened the Emergency Action Committee (EAC) on June 3 to review post's security posture with respect to the upcoming July 4th holiday (reftel). Participants included MCC, PEPFAR (representing CDC, USAID), CONS, Peace Corps, IMO, and A/MO.

¶2. (SBU) Currently, U.S. Mission Maseru is organizing or participating in two events to commemorate the 4th of July in Maseru: an official Independence Day representation event at the Chief of Mission's residence on July 4, and a non-official American Community picnic to be held at a local international high school on July 5.

¶3. (C) In recent years, post has hosted the official 4th of July representation event at one of two international-standard local hotels. Although security risks were low at these venues, the EAC concluded that holding the event this year at the Chief of Mission residence offers increased security protection, including strictly controlled entry and exit points, limited public access prior to the event, and Mission control over the security force (post's normal security provider). This enhanced security will also address a significant increase in invitees this year compared to last year (456 vs. 250).

¶4. (C) EAC members highlighted the need for a security presence around the entire perimeter of the compound (especially in an open field adjacent to the residence) and surveillance of vehicles (official and guest) parked in the street near the residence. EAC members also recommended that the Acting Post Security Officer (A/PSO) meet with senior Lesotho Mounted Police Service officials to solicit their full assistance with the July 4 event and to enhance communication flow in coming weeks. The EAC assesses that host country security personnel are fully cooperative with U.S. Mission requests related these and other USG-hosted events.

¶5. (C) Although the Mission plans to offer limited GSO support, the non-official American Community Maseru 4th of July celebration is organized largely by local Amcit expatriates and Basotho colleagues. The event is expected to mirror last year's celebration: a non-conspicuous, low-key picnic and afternoon of sports and activities which saw a peak attendance of about 60 participants. EAC members agreed that the Post Security Office should seek an enhanced presence by the high school's security provider. The EAC also recommended that several Embassy employees - equipped with radios - monitor likely routes of entry as well as the general security situation during the low profile event.

¶6. (C) Overall, the EAC concurred that post's security posture for the 4th of July event and the July 5 community celebration is appropriate and commensurate with the relatively low risk of terrorist attack. The Post Security Office will implement all

EAC recommendations.

MURPHY